

**Email From: International Certification Services**

**Subject:** Docket Number TM-02-03

Dear Sir:

Please accept our comments on Docket TM-02-03 submitted below:

April 28, 2003

Docket number TMD-02-03  
Richard H. Mathews  
Program Manager  
National organic Program  
USDA-AMS-TMP-NOP  
1400 Independence Ave SSW  
Room 4008-So. Ag Stop 0268 stop 0268  
Washington DC 20250

Dear Richard:

International Certification Services responses to docket TMD-02-03

205.601(c)(6) - Many peracetic acid formulations contain small amounts of toxic stabilizer compounds, for example 1,1-ethyldiene diphosphonic acid.

The National List inclusion of peracetic acid should only be for formulations that do not have in them synthetic stabilizers that are not included on the National List.

205.601(i)(7) - Same as above.

205.601(k) - ICS continues to oppose synthetic ethylene for regulation of pineapple flowering in the field. This material is only used for convenience of harvest and does not fully respect the natural life cycle of the plant/crop. If allowed for pineapple, it will be argued that such agents could also theoretically be allowed for other species that do not ripen or flower evenly. Such practices are contrary to OFPA criteria 2119(m)(6) and 2119(m)(7), regarding the material's essentiality and compatibility with organic production systems, respectively.

205.601(m)(2) - ICS opposes the allowance of any List 3 inerts in organic systems, unless specifically reviewed by an NOSB appointed Technical Advisory Panel review, and then "only to be used in passive pheromone dispensers, i.e., not to be contact with organic soil or crops."

205.602(g) - ICS opposes the allowance of sodium nitrate in unrestricted form for spirulina production. This material is under significant restriction by NOP for all other crops, the reasons for which have been elaborated in a variety of forums. The negative attributes of this material on organic production systems and the environment in general are no less for spirulina production. The proposed allowance appears to be the desires of a particular interest in the production sector that has yet to come to an adequately clear understanding of how to produce their product organically within the range of otherwise allowed practices and materials.

205.603(d)(1) - ICS strongly opposes the allowance of any synthetic amino acids in livestock production. Allowance for such use, even if for a supposedly limited time, sets a dangerous

precedent. Synthetic amino acids are not essential to the production. They are desired so that producers may increase volume and decrease time to bring their product to market. Their use substitutes for sound organic management. We are concerned that the 2005 deadline will come and producers will not have adjusted their systems accordingly, and will beg for another extension that will be granted. If this limited time allowance is to appear in the NOP rule, there should be additional language in the rule to state that it "may only be used if the producer submits a written plan to their certifying agent to explain how their operation will no longer be using this material by the October 21, 2005 deadline."

205.605(b) -- [The second 205.605(a) should really be 205.605(b).] ICS opposes the allowance of synthetic ethylene for degreening of citrus, and in fact continue to oppose the use of synthetic ethylene for all purposes in organic production. The effects of synthetic ethylene production are negative as regards the environmental impact and potential human safety. Although used for convenience by some producers, distributors, and marketers and of agricultural products, the material in its synthetic form is not essential to any part of an organic production system. The pattern of allowance of this material for more products is a bad precedent, and paves the way for more widespread use, which will allow even further for the harvest of goods prior to peak ripeness, with a corresponding generally lower nutritional value of those goods. Such practices are not compatible with organic principles.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.